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Space as an Artistic Medium (4)

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ATLASCOELESTISZEROG

Abstract

"AtlasCoelestisZeroG" is a sculpture designed for the microgravity environment in space. It draws inspiration from Galileo's invention of the telescope over 400 years ago and its impact on our understanding of the universe. The sculpture's gyroscopic movement represents the perpetual motion of our Solar System. Transported flat, it unfolds in microgravity with the slightest touch of a fingertip and continues rotating with the movement of ambient air. The sculpture consists of 13 concentric rings made of aerospace-grade aluminum connected by rotating joints tilted by 36 degrees, creating a movement that reflects light and casts shadows in the surrounding environment. It is 287mm in diameter, 3mm thick and weighs 600 grams.

"AtlasCoelestisZeroG" is a kinetic microgravity sculpture that represents an international and universal symbol of our Solar System while demonstrating the creativity of human minds and the capabilities of human technologies. The sculpture was prominently shown in the Kibo module of the space station during a special linked communication between the STS-134 and Expedition 27 crew members and Pope Benedict XVI. New technologies in design and art perpetually change how we visualize the world, and we have begun to explore the exciting possibilities in the cutting-edge territory of weightlessness. As human space exploration continues to develop, art in space environments — especially kinetic sculptures — will become increasingly important, not only as a countermeasure to the effects of sensory deprivation, but also to fulfill the human need for culture and beauty. Architecture and Vision is an international and multidisciplinary team working in the development of innovative design and technology transfer between architecture, aerospace and art. It has designed large-scale sculptures, aircraft interiors, and mobile buildings for extreme terrestrial environments, as well as Moon and Mars habitats in collaboration with the European Space Industry. Its founders, Italian architect Arturo Vittori and Swiss architect Andreas Vogler, were coined as 'Modern Day Leonardos' by the Museum of Science and Industry Chicago and are represented in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. The STS-134 Mission was the final mission of the space shuttle Endeavour and marked the second to last mission of the American shuttle program.